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Gorbachev's Reorganization of the Party: Breaking the Stranglehold of the Apparatus

A Research Paper

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Gorbachev's Reorganization of the Party: Breaking the Stranglehold of the Apparatus

A Research Paper

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**Gorbachev's Reorganization
of the Party: Breaking the
Stranglehold of the
Apparatus**

Scope Note

This Research Paper deals with the reorganization of the main bodies constituting the apparatus of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, including the Central Committee Secretariat and departments—a process that has made considerable headway since the September 1988 Central Committee plenum. It builds on two earlier Research Papers, **L**

L, and SOV 89-10024X **L** March 1989, *Gorbachev's Reform of the State Institutions: Toward a Parliamentary System?*, which assessed the attempt to shift some party functions and power to state institutions. Forthcoming papers on the party's role in the economy and on party electoral reform will evaluate how Gorbachev's reform program affects the authority and responsibility of the party apparatus.

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Gorbachev's Reorganization of the Party: Breaking the Stranglehold of the Apparatus

Summary

*Information available
as of 16 May 1989
was used in this report.*

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has launched a major reorganization of the party's bureaucracy that has changed the decisionmaking structure and could result in a historic redefinition of the party's place in Soviet society. The reorganization weakens Gorbachev's institutional rivals in the party and augments the powers of bodies that he now heads—the Politburo on the party side and the Supreme Soviet on the state side. In addition, changes in the structure, functions, and size of key party bodies appear designed to reduce the party's control of several areas that it previously supervised closely, thus restricting the party's role as strategic planner, political vanguard, and force for cohesion in the country. The party reforms may also be intended to complement wide-ranging reforms that will enhance the decisionmaking power of state bodies, from legislative and governing councils (soviets) to individual enterprises.

A key element of this sweeping reform was the creation in September 1988 of six policy-oriented party commissions composed of Central Committee and Central Auditing Commission members. The commissions correspond to the main foreign and domestic sectors of Soviet policy and have taken over some of the powers of the party Secretariat. The reorganization could fundamentally reorder Soviet politics. It represents the most comprehensive transformation of the party's structure since Khrushchev's controversial bifurcation of the apparatus into industrial and agricultural sectors in 1962. Gorbachev may hope that the commissions will facilitate reform of the Soviet system, but his overall goals appear to go far beyond simply creating a new administrative apparatus, extending to reducing party control in general and enhancing his own power.

We believe Gorbachev is using the commissions to keep power that was formerly concentrated in the Secretariat diffused among individual "senior" party secretaries who no longer have the forum of weekly Secretariat meetings to formulate positions that run counter to the Politburo's. Erstwhile "Second Secretary" Yegor Ligachev is particularly affected by the reorganization. His formal restriction to oversight of agriculture weakens his political power and authority. The changes—especially the formation of the specialized commissions—not only limit the range of issues that any of the party secretaries other than Gorbachev can address but also effectively eliminate the "second secretary" position.

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The commissions supposedly have assumed the responsibility for recommending policy options to the Politburo but apparently will play little, if any, role in policy implementation. It is unclear whether the commissions will be active in the appointment of party personnel, or if the Cadre Department will have greater influence in that area. It is also possible that the Secretariat, meeting infrequently, will continue to perform that function. The commissions' size (large by commission standards, but small when compared with the Central Committee) may allow Gorbachev and his supporters to manipulate them in a way that the Soviet leader could not manipulate the Secretariat.

In addition to creating the commissions, the reorganization:

- Consolidates over 20 functionally specific Central Committee departments into nine departments with broad responsibilities designed to support the commissions.
- Reduces party staff positions by 40 percent at the CPSU level.
- At least in theory relieves the party of some major responsibilities—in particular for the day-to-day management of the economy—that are intended to be assumed by other institutions.

The reorganization of the party's structure represents at least a short-term political victory for Gorbachev because it undercuts his political rivals and gives him greater control over the party bureaucracy. On the other hand, signs of confusion and unresolved questions about the reorganization may indicate high-level political disagreement over how far party reform should go. Rivals in the party—including those within the Politburo itself—will undoubtedly be keeping a close eye on how far the erosion of party functions is allowed to proceed. Moreover, the party apparatus is now reeling from the vote of no confidence it received in the March elections for the new Congress of People's Deputies. That experience may galvanize resistance to Gorbachev's attack on the party bureaucracy and make it more difficult for him to strip it of key powers.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Scope Note	iii
Summary	v
Recognizing the Need for Reform	1
Creation of the Commissions	3
Primary Goal—To Limit the Secretariat	3
Commission Membership	5
Confusion in the Ranks	10
Streamlining the Apparatus	11
“New” Departments	14
What Will Change?	18
Implications for Political Reform	19
Redistributing Power	19
Implications for Gorbachev	20
An Uncertain Outlook	20

Gorbachev's Reorganization of the Party: Breaking the Stranglehold of the Apparatus

Recognizing the Need for Reform

The Soviet party apparatus,¹ as the party's executive arm, has in effect run the Soviet Union on a day-to-day basis throughout most of Soviet history. It grew quickly in size and responsibility, especially under Stalin, who expanded its role dramatically. Under Brezhnev, the apparatus grew into a huge bureaucracy with established prerogatives and a vested interest in opposing change. When Gorbachev was named General Secretary in 1985, he was saddled with a party apparatus that had developed into a self-serving, intensely conservative bureaucracy that kept state (the Supreme Soviet and other nominally legislative bodies) and government (the Council of Ministers) bodies on a short leash.

Since the beginning of Gorbachev's tenure, reformist Soviets have advocated reorganizing and trimming the party apparatus to make it more responsive to contemporary needs, eliminate duplication of the state apparatus, and force the party to play more of a strategic political leadership role. Gorbachev, too, has been on record favoring a cutback in the size and influence of the party apparatus. At the June 1988 party conference, he emphasized in his report the need to reduce the influence of the party vis-a-vis state organs and backed the transfer of more power to the soviets—the network of local, regional, and republic legislatures. Similarly, his report to the July 1988 Central Committee plenum called for “completely relieving the party apparatus of economic management functions” and making it “considerably smaller.” The conference resolution on the state and

government endorsed reorganization of the party apparatus “in the very near future,” and the plenum resolution ordered the Politburo to come up with a new structure for the Central Committee apparatus as well as for the republic- and oblast-level party organizations.

Although the conference and plenum approved the reorganization in principle, the lack of personnel turnover at the conference led many observers to conclude that Gorbachev was not strong enough to see through the reform of an entrenched and careerist party apparatus. Even the July plenum resolution's proposal to complete the reorganization of the apparatus by the end of 1988—an authoritative endorsement of reform—did not ensure the practical implementation of reforms that threatened so many vested interests.

Within two months of the July plenum, however, Gorbachev proved that he had the political strength to impose radical change on the party apparatus. The 30 September 1988 Central Committee plenum created six party commissions² to oversee the reorganized apparatus. Signs of the reorganization appeared almost immediately in the Soviet media, when a number of Central Committee staffers were identified in new positions only days after the September plenum. By the time the 28 November plenum convened to spell out the duties of the commissions, the shape of the reorganized Central Committee apparatus had been determined (see table 1 and figures 1 and 2 at back of paper).

¹ The term “party apparatus” refers generically to the sprawling, heavily institutionalized network of up to 250,000 Communist Party (CPSU) employees who head and staff party organizations all over the Soviet Union. More narrowly, the term is also used to refer to the Moscow-based Central Committee departments and their staffs—a total of between 2,000 and 3,000 top party bureaucrats, many of whom are specialists—charged with supporting the work of the party's highest executive bodies.

² The commissions are Party Building and Cadre Policy (Chairman, Georgiy Razumovskiy), Ideological (Chairman, Vadim Medvedev), Socioeconomic Policy (Chairman, Nikolay Slyun'kov), Agrarian Policy (Chairman, Yegor Ligachev; Deputy Chairman, Viktor Nikonov), International Policy (Chairman, Aleksandr Yakovlev), and Legal Policy (Chairman, Viktor Chebrikov). All are party secretaries.

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Table 1
Party Secretaries' Responsibilities

	Before the Reorganization	After the Reorganization
Yegor Ligachev	"Second Secretary," daily management of party apparatus, cadre policy, ideology, agriculture	Agriculture
Viktor Nikonov	Agriculture	Agriculture
Aleksandr Yakovlev	Ideology, propaganda, culture, foreign affairs	Foreign affairs
Vadim Medvedev	Bloc relations	Ideology
Nikolay Slyun'kov	Economic policy	Economic policy
Viktor Chebrikov	KGB chairman	Security organs, legal affairs
Lev Zaykov ^b	Moscow first secretary, secretary without portfolio	Moscow first secretary, secretary without portfolio
Georgiy Razumovskiy	Personnel	Personnel
Oleg Baklanov	Defense industry	Defense industry
Anatoliy Luk'yanov	Security organs, legal affairs	Reassigned to Supreme Soviet
Aleksandra Biryukova	Light industry	Reassigned to Council of Ministers
Vladimir Dolgikh	Heavy industry	Retired
Anatoliy Dobrynin	Foreign affairs	Adviser to Gorbachev in Supreme Soviet

^a Before and after 30 September 1988.

^b Although Zaykov has had no full-time portfolio as a party secretary since taking over the Moscow party organization, he probably continues his previous involvement in the defense industrial sector.

Creation of the Commissions

The November plenum approved a resolution "On the Commissions of the CPSU Central Committee" that listed the names of the commission members and outlined the commissions' functions. It instructed the commissions to study "the most important issues" facing the party and the country, "weigh the options," and—as their titles indicate—make policy recommendations to the Politburo and Central Committee. The commissions will meet in full session "as required, but not less frequently than every three months," and they can meet in smaller working groups between sessions. They will have at their disposal the services of their corresponding Central Committee departments as

well as experts and academics who, according to party secretary Medvedev, may occasionally be asked to provide a commission with specific policy proposals. The commissions will report directly to the Politburo (see inset).

Primary Goal—To Limit the Secretariat

The commissions were formed ostensibly as part of Gorbachev's drive to "democratize" the party—to give non-Politburo members a greater policy role. But Gorbachev's most immediate political purpose apparently was to limit the responsibilities of the Secretariat, which was chaired by Ligachev at its weekly meetings and was emerging as more of a hindrance

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Commissions and Soviet Decisionmaking

Commissions have traditionally been formed to supervise or troubleshoot a specific area of concern, and they have usually been chaired by the party secretary in charge of the relevant area. Commissions were used extensively during the Brezhnev era, which relied heavily on consensus building and nonconfrontational policy decisionmaking. Commissions from that period, several of which are still working, had both advisory responsibilities and limited decision-making power. At a minimum, a commission's recommendations probably had—and will continue to have—considerable influence in shaping Politburo policy decisions.

The commissions, like those that served Brezhnev, may afford Gorbachev the opportunity to circumvent full Politburo consideration of certain issues or to prejudice the outcome of Politburo deliberations by preliminary actions taken within the commissions. It is more likely, however, that Gorbachev will use his commissions as a device to transfer power that had been wielded by the Secretariat back to the Politburo. At the same time, they may afford the General Secretary a means of bypassing a potentially hostile Central Committee on some contentious issues.

than an aid to reform.¹ [] commented in October 1988 that the Secretariat had in practice come to rival the Politburo. [] the Secretariat's recommendations were almost always received by regional and local party officials as directives, and they did not always coincide with Politburo decisions. By cutting the Secretariat out of the policymaking process, Gorbachev has strengthened the Politburo as an institution and himself as its chairman.

¹ With the onset of Brezhnev's physical and mental decline in the mid-1970s, one of the senior secretaries—the so-called second secretary—took on an increasing share of the daily administration of the party apparatus. When Brezhnev died in 1982, the second secretary's management of the party's affairs had become virtually institutionalized to include chairing Secretariat meetings and oversight responsibility for personnel policy, ideology, and other elements of foreign and domestic policy. At the national level the position of "second secretary" has always been unofficial; party organizations at the republic level and below have formally designated second secretaries.

There are still references to the Secretariat in the Soviet media, but its current role remains unclear. In the past, the Secretariat's narrow official mandate "to direct current work, chiefly in the selection of cadres and the verification of the fulfillment of party decisions," was translated into broad executive responsibilities, including:

- Formulation, with the support of the Central Committee departments, of policy recommendations to the Politburo.
- Management, by its vetting authority, of the issues that were put before the Politburo for a final decision.
- Supervision, also through the departments, of policy execution by governmental and other institutions.
- Control, via the party's *nomenklatura*, of the selection and placement of personnel in party and government posts.

In his controversial speech to the October 1987 Central Committee plenum—which was finally published in the February 1989 edition of the party's information journal, *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*—then Moscow party chief Boris Yel'tsin charged that changes in the work of the Secretariat that had been agreed on at the June 1987 plenum still had not been implemented. "Even though five months have elapsed since then," Yel'tsin charged, "I must say that nothing has changed, especially as far as the style of work of the party's Central Committee Secretariat and the style of work of comrade Ligachev are concerned." By late summer 1988—after the "Andreyeva affair"—Gorbachev may have taken Yel'tsin's words to heart and decided that his political interests would be better served by a weak Secretariat that he could dominate through the Politburo and the commissions than by a strong, independent Secretariat chaired by Ligachev.

² The "Andreyeva affair" began in March 1988 when a letter—ostensibly written by a Leningrad professor named Nina Andreyeva—attacking the scope and pace of reform appeared in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, the Russian Republic's party newspaper, a day before Gorbachev left on a trip to Yugoslavia. Available evidence indicates that Ligachev played a major role in getting the letter published. Three weeks after its publication, however, *Pravda* strongly condemned the letter as representing "antirestructuring forces." [] reported that Ligachev had been censured by the Politburo for his actions, and the strong proreform backlash gave reformers momentum going into the 19th Party Conference.

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Newly appointed International Department chief Valentin Falin told Tokyo *Shimbun* in early October 1988 that the Secretariat was being restructured to make clear the lines of responsibility among the party secretaries. He noted that "unnecessary arguments and disagreements had occurred . . . because there was no clear-cut distinction in areas of responsibility among secretaries and because many secretaries took charge of the same areas." Creation of the commissions has formally delineated the duties of the remaining party secretaries, eliminating much of the overlap between individual portfolios. Increasing the number of senior secretaries¹ from five to seven (not counting Gorbachev) has diffused power among the party secretaries and, in effect, "cheapened" the post of party secretary. As a result, no one secretary—with the exception of General Secretary Gorbachev—possesses appreciably more power than the others.

At a press conference following the November 1988 plenum, party secretary Medvedev would cryptically say only that "the commissions do not intend somehow to replace the Central Committee Secretariat."

According to some [] the commissions are "a total fiction" and operate similarly to the Brezhnev-era Supreme Soviet (that is, they meet infrequently and have a heterogeneous membership, but no real power). According to [] the commissions mostly confer status on their members and play no genuine role in policymaking. They also noted that ad hoc commissions (on nationalities and education, for example) are staffed by individuals from various Central Committee departments, suggesting that policy is made on a more informal basis than in the forum of the "official" commissions.

The creation of the commissions almost certainly was controversial, and there are some signs that Gorbachev kept the idea a secret until the last minute to avoid an outcry from those in the leadership who stood to lose power. In a letter written to the Politburo on 24 August 1988 outlining his conception of the reorganized apparatus, Gorbachev did not even mention the establishment of commissions. By keeping the

commissions under his hat for as long as possible, Gorbachev may have denied opponents in the leadership time to consider the implications of their creation and prevented his opponents from offering an effective alternative.

Creating the commissions offered Gorbachev immediate political benefits. The commissions will assume the Secretariat's policymaking role, but it is doubtful that they will play as pervasive a role as the Secretariat. Moreover, it is unlikely that the commission members—who have full-time jobs, are scattered all over the country, and meet only once every three months—will be as politically effective as fewer than a dozen full-time party secretaries would be meeting once a week. Because of the size and decentralization of the commissions, it appears that Gorbachev will have an easier time controlling them than he did the Secretariat, because the Politburo will review the commissions' work.

The commissions apparently will play little if any role in policy implementation and perhaps none in party organizational work. Responsibility for implementation will theoretically be shifted from the Secretariat and its departments (although the departments will probably continue to verify implementation) to the Council of Ministers, local soviets, and individual enterprises. Some evidence indicates that a weakened Secretariat, meeting infrequently, will continue to monitor implementation of some party decisions and play a significant role in party personnel appointments. First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bessmertnykh said in November 1988 that the commissions would have responsibility for formulating general policy lines—formerly the job of the Secretariat—and *Kommunist* editor Nail Bikkenin added in December that the Secretariat still exists but that its functions are now "organizational, not analytical." How the commissions develop probably will have the greatest influence on the role the Secretariat plays in the future. Should the commissions—with their lack of a clearly defined mission and without the institutional cohesion of the Secretariat—prove to be ineffective forums for policymaking, some of the Secretariat's former powers could be revived.

¹ Party secretaries who are concurrently Politburo full members are referred to as senior secretaries. Senior secretaries have traditionally wielded considerable authority within the Politburo and informally outrank their nonsecretary colleagues on that body.

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Gorbachev will face some obstacles in the commissions. The commission chairmen, all of whom are party secretaries and authoritative political actors in their own right, may not prove easy to manage. On the one hand, the new distribution of responsibilities among the chairmen limits their influence over issues outside their direct purview. On the other hand, within their areas of responsibility, the chairmen will clearly be in charge, and relevant department personnel and academic specialists will be accountable to them. The chairmen will almost certainly take the lead in assigning and carrying out tasks between quarterly commission meetings, giving them a great deal of authority over their policy areas.

The distribution of duties among the commission chairmen also suggests compromise. The reorganization took Ligachev out of his role as "second secretary" and restricted him to oversight of agriculture, but it also took Aleksandr Yakovlev—one of Gorbachev's closest allies—out of ideology and put him in charge of foreign policy, where Gorbachev already had the support of Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. Medvedev, who is less outspoken than Yakovlev on some key ideological issues, was placed in charge of ideology, and Chebrikov, while giving up chairmanship of the KGB, was put in charge of legal and security issues.

Despite the benefits they offer Gorbachev, the commissions are not without their disadvantages. With seven senior secretaries, there is still a strong nucleus of the Secretariat remaining. Because of their infrequent meetings and widely scattered membership, the commissions leave a vacuum that could be filled by the Secretariat and allow it to reassert its traditional authority.

Commission Membership

According to several Soviet officials, the membership of the commissions was chosen following the 30 September 1988 plenum. Nominations were proposed by the commission chairmen, and then probably debated at the Politburo level. Reports in *Pravda* indicate that the Politburo discussed the composition of the commissions at least twice, at regular meetings on 3 October and 24 November. Although the commissions' memberships reflect a typical cross section

of Soviet officialdom, apparently there was some wrangling over their composition. For example, according to [] *Izvestiya* editor Ivan Laptev was shifted at the last minute from Medvedev's Ideological Commission to Yakovlev's International Policy Commission.

The members of the commissions represent a mix of party and state officials, cultural figures, experts, and workers similar to that of the current Central Committee, elected at the 27th Party Congress in 1986 (see table 2). The November 1988 plenum resolution states that the commissions were formed partly as a means of "restoring the principle of collective discussion and adopting of decisions," a reference to the June conference's suggestion to increase the involvement of Central Committee members in the decision-making process.

Institutional affiliation and occupation were undoubtedly important factors in deciding commission membership, and political patronage probably figured in some appointments, but the primary prerequisite for membership was apparently membership on the Central Committee or Central Auditing Commission. The commissions are staffed overwhelmingly by full Central Committee members. A number of important officials, including several newly appointed department chiefs who are not Central Committee members, were excluded from the commissions, and only eight of the 138 commission members have no Central Committee or Central Auditing Commission status. Medvedev told a press conference after the November plenum that five of the eight—the first secretaries from the Lithuanian, Estonian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Uzbek Republics—were included on commissions because they fill positions that normally merit Central Committee membership. The inclusion of the five non-Russian republic party chiefs on the commissions may also reflect a token gesture to ethnic pride.

Regional party and state officials (the provincial apparatus) compose the largest group of all the commissions' members, surpassing even their high representation on the Central Committee. Over one-third are obkom first secretaries from the Russian Republic (RSFSR), a share that continues a traditional bias in

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Table 2
Composition of the Commissions *

	Commissions ^b						Total	Share (percent)	Share Elected at Congress (percent)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)			
Total	25	25	21	23	23	21	138	100	100
Central Committee status									
Full member	21	14	16	18	14	13	96	70	54
Candidate member	3	5	4	4	4	4	24	17	30
Central Auditing Commission	1	5	1	0	1	2	10	7	16
None	0	1	0	1	4	2	8	6	
Affiliation of members									
Provincial apparatus ^c	13	6	9	15	8	7	58	42	39
Government apparatus	1	3	6	1	4	2	17	12	24
Central party apparatus	5	3	1	3	3	1	16	12	9
Cultural officials ^d	0	8	1	0	4	1	14	10	4
Workers	3	1	2	2	1	3	12	9	11
Administrative organs ^e	0	0	0	0	2	4	6	4	9
Mass media	1	2	1	0	1	1	6	4	2
National organizations ^f	2	0	1	1	0	1	5	4	2
"Dead souls" ^g	0	2	0	1	0	1	4	3	

* Compared with that of the Central Committee as a whole.

^b Commissions are numbered as follows: (1) Party Building and Cadre Policy, (2) Ideological, (3) Socioeconomic Policy, (4) Agrarian Policy, (5) International Policy, (6) Legal Policy.

^c Includes republic party and state officials, oblast and local officials.

^d Includes members of creative unions, institutes, and academics.

^e Includes military, KGB, and procuracy.

^f Includes members of Komsomol and trade unions.

^g Includes commission members who have lost their official posts since the commissions were formed as well as commission members who retired from the Central Committee at the 25 April 1989 Central Committee plenum. Both groups probably will lose their commission membership.

leading Soviet party bodies. Representation of the central government apparatus is significantly lower on the commissions than in the Central Committee, and the proportion of cultural officials on the commissions is nearly triple that in the Central Committee. Presumably, the low proportion of government *apparatchiki*—renowned as a group for their conservatism—and the high proportion of intellectuals—among whom support for reform is generally strong—augurs well for Gorbachev in the commissions

The Ukraine is heavily represented on the commissions, as is Moscow, Leningrad, and Krasnodar, the home region of Politburo candidate member Razumovskiy. Press organs are represented on all but one

commission. Although none of the commissions appears to have a majority of reformers or traditionalists, each has a number of Moscow-based supporters of Gorbachev,⁴ and their presence should ensure that his interests will be well represented on the commissions

Some groups within the Central Committee appear to have been purposely excluded from commission representation. Most striking is the lack of representatives

⁴ Two current and one former aide to Gorbachev are commission members, presumably a sign that he played a strong role in naming the commissions' members.

of the many industrial ministries and state committees—which form the overwhelming majority of the Council of Ministers (see inset). Their low representation on the commissions probably reflects their generally negative attitude toward economic reform.⁷ Among Central Committee full members, 32 officials associated with the Council of Ministers were excluded from commission membership. Of the 16 representatives of the Council of Ministers on commissions, only one (the Minister of the Electronics Industry) heads an industrial ministry. Representatives of functional ministries and state committees (for example, Foreign Affairs, Defense, Culture, and Health)—which form a small minority in the Council of Ministers but which also are less likely to be eliminated in a reorganization of that body—are much more heavily represented on the commissions.

Restricting commission membership to only a fraction of the Central Committee membership may, in the near term, take a hostile faction within the Central Committee completely out of the decisionmaking process. Over time, the commissions could gain influence vis-a-vis the entire Central Committee as they assume a greater institutional role or as their recommendations—filtered through the Politburo—are presented to the Central Committee as faits accomplis. Neutralizing the power of the Central Committee could work to Gorbachev's advantage because it will decrease the influence of a body that has been characterized by Western and Soviet observers alike as hostile to reform. Moreover, Gorbachev may hope to use the commissions to "divide and conquer" the Central Committee, assuming that several small commissions—some with an apparently high concentration of reformers—will be more compliant and supportive of reform than one larger, more orthodox body.⁸

⁷ Many of the economic ministries and state committees would stand to lose a great deal of authority—as well as finances and personnel—if some of the reforms that are currently being debated are enacted. Moreover, proposals to consolidate to a more manageable number of ministries threaten the very existence of many state entities, fueling the opposition of many of them to far-ranging economic reform.

⁸ The commissions were created before the mass retirement of more than one-fourth of the Central Committee's full members at the April 1989 plenum. Even with their exodus, which was, in effect, a purge of this body's most orthodox members, however, the Central Committee remains notably more orthodox in its approach to reform than Gorbachev and his allies

Excluding the Industrial Ministers: "No accident"?

Sovietologists believe that the industrial ministers on the Central Committee represent one of the most virulent sources of resistance to economic reform. Gorbachev appears to have scored a major victory in forming the commissions by managing to exclude from membership nearly all of these officials, including representatives of the following heavy and defense industrial ministries: ^a

*Aviation Industry
Chemical and Petroleum Machine-Building^b
Coal Industry
Communications
Communications Equipment Industry
Construction^b
Construction in the Far East and Transbaykal Regions^b
Construction Materials Industry^c
Construction of Petroleum and Gas Industry Enterprises
Construction of Road and Municipal Machine-Building^b
Defense Industry
Gas Industry
Ferrous Metallurgy
Industrial Construction^b
Installation and Special Construction Work
Instrument-Making, Automation Equipment and Control Systems
Land Reclamation and Water Economy
Light Industry
Machine-Building for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances^b
Petroleum Industry
Petroleum Refining and Petrochemical Industry
Power and Electrification
Power Machine-Building
Railways
Shipbuilding Industry
Timber Industry^b
Transport Construction^b*

^a Minister is a Central Committee full member unless otherwise noted.

^b Minister is a Central Committee candidate member.

^c Minister is a Central Auditing Commission member.

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Personnel. The Party Building and Cadre Policy Commission is a mixed bag of reformers, with close ties to either Gorbachev or Razumovskiy, and traditionalists, many of whom are associated with Ligachev. The 25-member commission is chaired by Razumovskiy, who has close career ties to Gorbachev and is the only commission chairman who is not a Politburo full member. There may be resistance in the Politburo to the promotion of Razumovskiy to full membership on the grounds that it would give Gorbachev uncontested authority in the critical cadres field or that it would give Razumovskiy, who also heads the corresponding Cadre Department, too much power. Despite his being of lower rank than the other commission chairmen, Razumovskiy holds one of the most important positions. His oversight of personnel matters, particularly now that Ligachev is restricted to agriculture, gives Gorbachev a stronger hand in ensuring the appointment of officials at all levels who will implement his reforms.

The majority of Razumovskiy's commission's members are republic and regional officials, mostly drawn from the RSFSR, and seven commission members are either current or former officials in the party's Cadres Department. Of these, the 70-year-old first deputy chief, Yevgeniy Razumov, was promoted when Ligachev headed the department and has appeared unenthusiastic about reform. The central apparatus, however, is also represented by Valeriy Boldin, who has close career ties to Gorbachev and whose General Department will, according to the November plenum resolution, play a major supporting role in the work of the commissions.

Ideology. The Ideological Commission, chaired by Vadim Medvedev, has a distinctly reformist membership. Medvedev, who previously worked as party secretary for relations with the Bloc nations, has consistently supported political reform but has also shown himself willing to set limits on ideological revisionism. He was elected a Politburo full member at the September plenum, making him the most junior of the full members. [] reported in early December 1988 that Yakovlev, who handled ideology before the September shakeup and has been a full member for over a year, continues to involve himself in ideological matters.

Whereas the Party Building and Cadre Policy Commission draws most of its membership from regional officials and members of the central party apparatus, who have hands-on experience, almost a third of the 25-member Ideological Commission consists of cultural officials. The heads of one ministry (Culture) and two state committees (Education and Television and Radio) are commission members. Nine members represent various creative unions, the Academy of Sciences, and party and state institutes. Several of this number are noted reformists. Institute of Marxism-Leninism rector Georgiy Smirnov—formerly an aide to Gorbachev—and Ivan Frolov, a progressive and one of two current aides to Gorbachev on commissions, are both members. Union of Theatre Workers head Mikhail Ul'yanov delivered a radically reformist speech at the 19th Party Conference and has repeatedly expressed support of *perestroyka*.

Others, such as Academy of Sciences head Guriy Marchuk—who has been criticized by Academy members for his ineffectiveness—and Tikhon Khrennikov (Composers' Union) have favored a more moderately paced rate of reform. Aleksandr Kapto, chief of the Central Committee Ideological Department, has a reputation for a no-nonsense approach to ethnic unrest and recently expressed mild reservations about some aspects of political reform. The conservative editor of *Pravda*, Viktor Afanas'yev, is balanced on the commission by the editor of the staunchly reformist *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, Al'bert Bel'yayev.

The Economy. Nikolay Slyun'kov's Socioeconomic Policy Commission has 21 members, of whom 16 are either regional leaders or central state and party officials. Two ministries (Electronics Industry and Health) and three state committees (Statistics, Gosplan, and Nature Protection) are represented on the commission. Three of the commission members, Aleksandra Biryukova (deputy premier for light industry, consumer, and social affairs), Yuriy Maslyukov (first deputy premier and Gosplan chief), and Aleksandr Vlasov (RSFSR premier)—all candidate members of the Politburo—give the commission the greatest concentration of senior officials in any of the commissions, indicating the importance of the economy to the

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current phase of political reform. Vlasov is a strong supporter of Gorbachev's reform initiatives; Maslyukov has publicly supported the conversion of some defense industrial enterprises to consumer production; and Biryukova has been a steady, if uninspired, supporter of *perestroika*.

Agriculture. Ligachev's Agrarian Policy Commission, although it draws most of its members from the traditionally orthodox regional leaders,^{*} has a surprisingly reformist cast. It is the only commission to have a Politburo full member, Viktor Nikonov (who is also the commission's deputy chairman), other than the chairman. Nikonov's duties as Ligachev's deputy are not yet clear, although he may be intended as a counterweight to Ligachev. Nikonov's presence on the commission is awkward for Ligachev because it puts a fully qualified potential replacement as his deputy.

The commission is composed overwhelmingly of full members of the Central Committee and is dominated by RSFSR party chiefs. Eight of its 23 members are first secretaries of RSFSR obkoms and kraykoms. The regional party bosses on the commission appear to be disproportionately oriented toward reform. Boris Volodin (Rostov), Aleksey Ponomarev (Belgorod), and Ivan Polozkov (Krasnodar) have all spoken out strongly in favor of agricultural reform, going well beyond lipservice to Moscow's line. Yegor Stroyev (Orel) and Vladimir Kalashnikov (Volgograd) have also been praised in the central press for successfully implementing reforms in predominantly agricultural regions. Stroyev, in fact, has been mentioned as a likely candidate for a senior post—possibly as a party secretary—in Moscow. The commission also has representatives from the heavily agricultural Belorussian, Kazakh, Ukrainian, Moldavian, and Kirghiz Republics.

Former Gosagroprom Chairman Vsevolod Murakhovskiy, a Gorbachev protege from Stavropol', is a member of the commission. It is unclear whether Murakhovskiy, who as head of the now abolished

^{*} At the June 1988 Party Conference, Ligachev referred to the importance of the regional leadership, noting that it was individuals in the Politburo "and a large group of obkom first secretaries" who made "the only correct decision" in electing Gorbachev General Secretary in March 1985.

agricultural superministry was criticized for everything from being a poor administrator to incompetence, has fallen from favor sufficiently to cost him his place on the commission. Agrarian Department chief Ivan Skiba also sits on the commission. A possible manifestation of Ligachev's occasional antipathy toward the central press is the lack of a media representative on the commission, despite the fact that Aleksandr Kharlamov, editor of *Sel'skaya zhizn'* (the Central Committee's agricultural organ), is a member of the Central Auditing Commission.

Foreign Policy. The International Policy Commission, chaired by Yakovlev, appears to span the ideological spectrum, but it includes many noted reformists. Four of its 23 members—Academy of Sciences Vice President Yevgeniy Velikhov, Tajik Second Secretary Petr Luchinskiy, World Economics and International Relations Institute (IMEMO) Director Yevgeniy Primakov, and International Department Chief Falin—were promoted from Central Committee candidate to full membership at the 25 April 1989 plenum. All are at least moderately reformist, and Velikhov appears very close to the General Secretary. The commission has two representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Ministers Valentin Nikiforov and Anatoliy Kovalev, but not Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze or First Deputy Minister Yuliy Vorontsov, both of whom are higher ranking) and one each from the KGB (Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, probably a Gorbachev ally) and the military (Gen. Sergey Akhromeyev, who retired as Chief of the General Staff to become an adviser to the Supreme Soviet). Georgiy Arbatov is also on the commission, but his continued tenure is in doubt since he retired as director of the USA and Canada Institute (IUSAC). Gorbachev aide Anatoliy Chernyayev is also a member.

A high number of regional officials are on Yakovlev's commission, including four republic first secretaries—from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, and Uzbekistan—with no Central Committee or Central Auditing Commission affiliation. Of these, three served as ambassadors before returning to their home republics, which suggests that they were appointed for their foreign policy expertise as well as because of their positions as republic party chiefs.

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Legal Policy. Chebrikov's Legal Policy Commission appears to have the lowest number of clearly identifiable reformers. It draws nearly half of its 21 members from regional officials and the "administrative organs"—the security organs and ministries that will be responsible for implementing reforms of the legal and judicial systems. Among the regional leaders are Leonid Bobykin, the Sverdlovsk Obkom first secretary who denounced Yel'tsin's supporters at the Party Conference, the Lithuanian and Tajik republic first secretaries, and Khar'kov (Ukraine) Obkom First Secretary Vladislav Mysnichenko, who had been rumored as a candidate to succeed Shcherbitskiy until Khar'kov came under fire for alleged widespread corruption. The security organs are represented by Vadim Bakatin, the newly appointed chairman of the MVD who offered strong support of Gorbachev's proposals at the 19th Party Conference, as well as Filipp Bobkov, First Deputy Chairman of the KGB, Minister of Justice Boris Kravtsov, and Main Political Administration chief Gen. Aleksey Lizichev. The commitment to reform of Bobkov, Kravtsov, and Lizichev is much less certain than Bakatin's.

The Legal Policy Commission matches the Cadre Commission's total of three genuine proletarians. Among the workers on Chebrikov's commission is Vladimir Zatvornitskiy, from Moscow. Since delivering a scathing critique of Yel'tsin at the November 1987 plenum that removed him as Moscow party chief, Zatvornitskiy has prospered. Within a month after the Moscow plenum, he accompanied Yel'tsin's nemesis, Ligachev, to Paris to attend the French Communist Party congress. In addition to being named to Chebrikov's commission, he is also one of the token workers on the Central Committee's Electoral Commission.

Defense Industry?

Moscow party chief Lev Zaykov, who remains a party secretary without portfolio, is rumored to chair a secret commission, parallel to the others, for defense industry. According to [] the rumored commission also includes party secretary for defense industry Oleg Baklanov and Minister of Defense Dmitriy Yazov, neither of whom was named to another commission. Although there is no evidence to corroborate this rumor, it is plausible. The existence

of such a commission would probably play a major role in Gorbachev's plan to switch some defense industry enterprises to the production of consumer goods. Its existence would also explain why the Soviets did not abolish the Defense Industry Department when other industrial departments were abolished. The failure to publicize such a commission would be in keeping with traditional military secrecy but would seem to contradict other signs that Gorbachev is extending *glasnost* to the defense sector. In addition, the Soviet media have acknowledged the continued existence of the Central Committee Defense Industry Department—now renamed the Defense Department—and identified its chief. It would seem pointless to publicize this department while keeping secret the commission that oversees it.¹⁰

Confusion in the Ranks

Soviet officials have said that much remains to be decided concerning the new commissions, suggesting confusion as to their ultimate form and role. []

[] told [] that, although the commissions would maintain the Central Committee's policymaking role, even he did not know how, in practice, the new party structure would interact with the constitutionally enhanced state apparatus. In January, []

[] told [] that the commissions were intended to assist the Politburo but would have an—undefined—"independent role" as well. Such high-level uncertainty suggests that the reformers have yet to fully develop the authority of the commissions and may be working from little more than a general blueprint.

Gorbachev has taken a bold move by limiting the authority of the Secretariat, thereby undercutting the institution that has traditionally been the General Secretary's strongest base of support. Gorbachev's

¹⁰ The Central Committee department for defense industry does not necessarily require a corresponding commission to oversee it. Several Soviet officials have said that there would be more departments than commissions, including the General Department, which handles Politburo paperwork and the party's mail, and the Administration of Affairs, which maintains the party's facilities and budget.

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earlier "packing" of the Secretariat with supporters suggested that he would use that body to build his power in the traditional way—by running the party through a strong Secretariat that is subordinate to the Politburo, thus ensuring the implementation of and bureaucratic compliance with central directives. Ligachev's ability to dominate the Secretariat prompted Gorbachev to take more drastic measures, including curtailing the Secretariat's activities and its weekly meetings.

The Soviets have not been consistent in describing the Secretariat's functions since the shakeup. Political commentator Fedor Burlatskiy said in a November 1988 interview in the Japanese press that the Secretariat "has ceased to function." Later that month, Yel'tsin told an audience of Komsomol activists that the Secretariat had not met in three months, and he strongly implied that Ligachev's unofficial position as second secretary had been eliminated. Gorbachev aide Georgiy Shakhnazarov also told an interviewer in November that "regular sessions [of the Secretariat] are no longer held as they were in the past," suggesting that it will continue to meet only on an ad hoc basis. Shakhnazarov added, "From now on, meetings of the Secretariat will be held, whenever necessary, with the party's General Secretary presiding," confirming a number of reports that there is no longer a "second secretary" running the Secretariat and managing its apparatus.

A number of senior Soviet officials—including Valentin Falin, Fedor Burlatskiy, Al'bert Vlasov, and Genadiy Gerasimov—agree that the post of second secretary has been eliminated at the highest level, at least for the time being. []

[] suggests that it is possible that the senior secretaries rotate in chairing Politburo meetings in Gorbachev's absence, and, without a regularly meeting Secretariat, the post of second secretary is essentially meaningless. In any event, Gorbachev may have intended for the "elimination" of the post to be temporary—a convenient maneuver to dilute Ligachev's influence and perhaps set the stage for eventually naming a new second secretary who is more attuned to the reformist political agenda.

The variety and ambiguity of Soviet interpretations of the reorganization indicate that its full implications are not yet clear to the Soviets themselves. It is possible that the Secretariat will be limited to recommending personnel appointments—its original duty following the 1917 revolution. Although that is an important function, it does not approximate the range of powers formerly enjoyed by the Secretariat.

First meetings of the central and various republic commissions have demonstrated reluctance to table the policy initiatives for which they were ostensibly created. Rather, the tendency has been to play it safe, restricting discussion to general outlines and a repetition of centrally approved guidelines on commission protocol and policy. The first meeting of the central Ideological Commission, for example, heard a briefing on the structure of its corresponding department and recommended the publication for discussion of the long-awaited law on the press. Similarly, []

[] that the Agrarian Policy Commission had accomplished very little at its first meeting. Unless the commissions carried out other, unreported duties, it does not appear that they—or the other commissions—will play a particularly influential policymaking role, at least in the short term.

Meanwhile, the republic party organizations seem to be following Moscow's lead in forming their commissions; reorganized republic party structures have had, not surprisingly, a strong resemblance to the new Central Committee structure (see inset). The composition of the Ukraine's commissions—the only ones that have been publicized so far—is strikingly similar to that of the Central Committee's commissions, and the resolution creating them virtually duplicates word for word that drafted for the national-level apparatus.

Streamlining the Apparatus

The departments—the working staff of the party apparatus—will support the commissions by continuing to provide substantive expertise in their areas of

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Cutting Regional Party Organizations

Cuts in the regional party apparatuses have paralleled those proposed in Moscow, with—at the republic level—the formation of Central Committee commissions and with the number of departments cut by more than half at all levels. The number of personnel laid off or fired as a result of the cutbacks, however, appears to be substantially lower, with a number of party apparatchiks—mainly from the branch economic departments—apparently slated for reassignment to the state economic apparatus.

So far, plenums in a number of non-Russian republics have proposed reorganizations comparable to those made at the national level, and the remaining republics are certain to follow their lead:

- A Ukrainian plenum, held 10-11 October, created five republic Central Committee commissions similar to the CPSU Central Committee commissions (there will be no Ukrainian commission for international affairs). The number of departments will be cut from 18 to nine and the number of republic-level "responsible workers" will be reduced from 453 to 320, a decrease of less than 30 percent. A second plenum, held 12 December, listed the memberships of the five republic commissions; the personnel chosen to staff the Ukrainian commissions were strikingly similar in background to the members of the central party commissions.

- The 1 November Kazakh plenum also established five commissions and cut the number of departments from 17 to eight. The plenum noted that 375, or 30 percent, of the republic, obkom, and gorkom personnel had been transferred to "strengthen grassroots party, soviet, and economic organs."

- The 25 October Latvian plenum decided to cut the number of republic departments from 16 to eight and to reduce the republic party apparatus by 30 percent. The plenum decided not to trim the staffs of city (gorkom) and district (raykom) party committees.

- The Moscow City committee reduced the number of departments from 17 to seven and decided to cut the gorkom staff by 30 percent at its 28 October plenum. Of that figure, one-third will be distributed among Moscow's raykoms, while others will be used "to reinforce local governing and economic bodies in the city."

- As of January, every republic had held its "restructuring" plenum. The results were uniformly similar to those described above, with very little deviation.

competence. The November 1988 plenum resolution directed the commissions to "rely in their work on the support of the relevant CPSU Central Committee departments," indicating that the departments will continue to play an important political role. It is more likely, however, that the reorganization will reduce the power of the departments insofar as their duties will not be as all encompassing as they were. Moreover, [] indicated that some of the old departments probably will be downgraded to sectors of those that remain.

Despite the instructions of the November plenum, the role of the remaining departments vis-a-vis the commissions is still unclear. It appears that the departments will still have a role in policymaking, but the Soviets are sending mixed signals on this point. In November []

[] told [] that his department will no longer deal with operative questions or be involved in drawing up policy papers. According to [] however []

[] that the departments will

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serve as the "working organs" of the commissions, implying some sort of policy support role. Gorbachev told an audience of cultural officials in early January that the apparatus's functions had been altered and "oriented toward policy" rather than day-to-day management. [] indicated in mid-March that the departments will serve as "standing secretariats" to their corresponding commissions and will be "conducting the party's daily research" in their areas of competence.

The apparatus has been consolidated from 20 different Central Committee departments into nine new ones " (see inset), reducing it to the smallest number of departments in over 40 years. Several departments—dealing mostly with specific sectors of the economy—have been abolished. The number of Central Committee department personnel has been reduced by about 40 percent, from 2,500 to about 1,500. [] indicated that an additional 500 central party workers may be cut in the future." Most of the personnel cuts have apparently been in the abolished departments. One immediate effect of the overall personnel reduction will be to increase slightly the size of the new departments, as the best party workers in the abolished departments are shifted to those that remain.

Gorbachev told cultural officials in a 6 January speech that "a decision has been made on cutting the party Central Committee apparatus by 40 percent, and a sizable part of the work in this area has already been done." The proportion of personnel being cut decreases for lower-level party organizations. At the republic and oblast levels, a 30-percent reduction of the party apparatus has been the norm, and lower-level party organizations—city and district committees—have experienced little or no staff reductions.

" Following the April 1989 Central Committee plenum, party Secretary Medvedev referred to the party's eight Central Committee departments, probably excluding the Administration of Affairs, which is not technically a department but which is in reality indistinguishable from one.

" It is unclear who is included in these figures, but the precise size of the apparatus may be slightly smaller or larger than 2,500. In his 24 August 1988 note to the Politburo, Gorbachev said that at that time the Central Committee apparatus numbered 1,940 "responsible" (otvetstvennyy) and 1,275 "support" (tekhnicheskii) workers, for a grand total of 3,215. Gorbachev did not make it clear if both groups would be cut in size.

Streamlining the Apparatus

The following is a list of new departments and their predecessors:

New	Old
Party Building and Cadre Work	Organizational-Party Work
State and Legal Agrarian	Administrative Organs Agriculture and Food Industry
Defense International	Defense Industry International Bloc Liaison Cadres Abroad Propaganda Culture Science and Educational Institutions Economic
Ideological	
Socioeconomic	
Abolished (possibly sectors of Socioeconomic Department)	Construction Chemical Industry Trade and Domestic Services Light Industry Machine-Building Heavy Industry Transportation and Communications

Unchanged

General
Administration of
Affairs

The reasoning behind the inversely proportional cuts is based on simple mathematics; there are thousands of lower-level party committees scattered across the Soviet Union, and 30 to 40 percent reductions in their staffs would release literally tens, if not hundreds, of

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thousands of party workers for reassignment. As it is, the Soviets are having difficulty reassigning cadres released from the central and republic party bureaucracies.

Regardless of the departments' precise role and size, the reorganization has brought about an apparent decrease in status associated with work in the central party apparatus. Speaking late in 1988, []

[] told [] that it was probable that no department would be headed by a party secretary. Of the 20 departments in existence in July 1988, five (Cadre, International, Bloc Liaison, Economic, and Administrative Organs) were headed by party secretaries. Now, only the Cadre Department remains under a party secretary. This exception may be temporary, but is probably because of the importance of the cadre portfolio, since it still oversees the appointment of the highest ranking party and state officials.

Employees of the central party apparatus who are not retained by the party are being given work elsewhere. In an October interview in the Czechoslovak press, then Cadre Department Deputy Chief Georgiy Kryuchkov implied that a substantial share (approximately one-third) of those leaving the central apparatus would be shifted to lower-level party organizations; another large group would transfer—along with its functions—to the state apparatus (for example, Dobrynin and Zagladin, who were transferred from the party's foreign policy apparatus to become advisers to the Supreme Soviet). Apparently, only a small minority will retire. Ironically, Kryuchkov himself was dispatched from the Cadre Department in Moscow to head the regional party organization in Odessa only two weeks after his interview.

Soviet officials have admitted that the reorganization has caused some problems in the party apparatus. Gorbachev himself hinted during his February tour of the Ukraine that the party apparatus was having difficulty attracting good people. Presumably, the greatest problem the party faces in attracting suitable cadres is that there is too much competition for a limited number of jobs, with veteran party employees scrambling to ensure themselves of the choicest assignments, thereby freezing out new blood. Others

currently outside the party apparatus may be thinking twice before accepting a job with an uncertain future.

Moscow Oblast party chief Valentin Mesyats indicated in a December 1988 *Pravda* interview that transferring workers to lower-level party organizations was not proceeding smoothly. "Truth to tell," Mesyats admitted, "so far not many people wish to assume the responsibility of working in a gorkom (city) or raykom (district) apparatus. Qualified specialists do not like the wages or, more important, the workload and the frequent lack of free time." This attitude can probably be extended to those who have lost their jobs in the central party apparatus as well.

The cuts have undoubtedly dealt a blow to the prestige associated with party work, and the morale of the remaining employees—particularly with the threat of further cuts—is probably low. One speaker at the April 1989 Central Committee plenum noted that some regional party organizations had been forced to draft party workers. Dissatisfaction has probably also spread to other institutions that have been forced to absorb the party's surplus personnel. Resentment in these institutions, which include ministries, academic institutes, and lower-level soviets and party organizations, is probably fueled by the relatively high salaries of the newcomers; []

[] told [] that party workers who had gone to lower-paying jobs were being allowed to keep their high party salaries.

"New" Departments

The reorganization, by reducing the number and size of the departments and subordinating them to the commissions, has probably enhanced Gorbachev's ability to control them. Although they have been described in the Soviet media as "new," the remaining departments are built from the remnants of their predecessors. In some cases, not even the names have been changed.

The *General Department* has come to be closely associated with the office of General Secretary. The department's head, Valeriy Boldin, is a member of the

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Cadre Policy Commission and has close career ties to Gorbachev, for whom he worked as an aide for six years before attaining his current position. The *Administration of Affairs*, which is responsible for providing logistic support to the party, is headed by another apparent Gorbachev ally, Nikolay Kruchina (who is also a member of the Cadre Policy Commission). The General Department and the Administration of Affairs were apparently unaffected by the reorganization. Both will play critical supporting roles in the apparatus and, according to the November plenum resolution, they will provide "the organizational and technical conditions for the functioning of the CPSU Central Committee's commissions."

Although the role of the Administration of Affairs in regard to the commissions will probably be restricted to one of making arrangements for their meetings, the role of the General Department could be especially important to Gorbachev's control of and influence over the commissions. With its responsibilities for Politburo support and maintenance of party documents, the General Department could serve as a means for Gorbachev to influence not only the agendas of the quarterly commission meetings, but also the decisions reached at those meetings as well.

The *Party Building and Cadre Work Department* (formerly Organizational-Party Work) will continue to be, with the General Department, one of the most important elements of the apparatus. The Cadre Department will retain most, if not all, of its broad responsibilities for personnel placement in party and other organizations. Although other departments have ceded some of their influence over lower-level party organizations, representatives of the Cadre Department have continued to attend the many republic- and oblast-level functions following the reorganization. Indeed, the Cadre Department may be the chief beneficiary of the overall reduction of the Central Committee apparatus, possibly adding personnel in an already existing sector for personnel training—an area that some Soviets have identified as one of the regime's priorities. Although some of the department's staffers have been assigned to jobs outside Moscow, the influx of workers from the abolished departments should easily fill their vacancies. The continuation of the more orthodox Razumov as the

The Ideological Department Hierarchy

Chief: Aleksandr Kapto

First Deputy Chief: Aleksandr Degtyarev

Deputy Chiefs:

- *Fundamental Scientific Research: Oleg Ozherelyev*
 - *Party Propaganda: I. A. Zaramenskiy*
 - *Mass Media: Unknown*
 - *Foreign Propaganda: Nikolay Yefimov*
 - *Training and Education: V. V. Ryabov*
 - *Culture and Arts: Vladimir Yegorov*
-

department's first deputy chief may be an indication of Ligachev's continuing influence, but at 70. Razumov's days in the apparatus are probably numbered. There has been significant turnover below Razumov—four of six of the department's deputy chiefs have been identified since October 1988, as have several new sector chiefs.

Like the reorganized Cadre Department, the *Ideological Department* will have a broad range of responsibilities, because it incorporates the three former departments for Propaganda, Culture, and Science and Educational Institutions. In a February 1989 *Pravda* interview, department chief Aleksandr Kapto said that the department consisted of six "subdepartments"—each apparently headed by a deputy department chief and corresponding to the major areas of Soviet social life (see inset). The consolidation of the traditional "ideological" departments into one signals the regime's desire to present a unified party line domestically and abroad. At the same time, the division of the department into only six general subunits indicates that it will exercise less direct control over details of the regime's ideological policy.

Kapto is a Central Committee full member whose roots are in the Ukraine and whose political orientation is unclear. Kapto served in a number of important

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ideological posts under Shcherbitskiy in the Ukraine, but Shcherbitskiy reportedly engineered his removal from the republic and appointment as Ambassador to Cuba—a traditional diplomatic exile post—in 1986. His tour as Ambassador to Cuba ended after two years in the summer of 1988. When he returned to Moscow, he was identified as first deputy chief of a department—almost certainly Bloc Liaison, which was then headed by party Secretary Medvedev, and which was abolished in the reorganization. His appointment to head the party's Ideological Department suggests that he had the sponsorship of at least Ideological Commission Chairman Medvedev.

Kapto's public persona suggests that he is a strong believer in party discipline and that he may have some reservations about how far *glasnost* has already gone. In his *Pravda* interview, he lamented "the stridency, the sensationalism, and . . . destructive thrust" of some writings that had gotten out of hand and caused "confusion in people's minds." During his tenure in the Ukraine, Kapto had chief responsibility for the republic's hardline policy against nationalism. In the post of Ukrainian ideology secretary, Kapto's speeches and articles were conservative and included numerous citations of both Shcherbitskiy and Mikhail Suslov, Brezhnev's now discredited ideology chief. Because the Ideological Department probably will have at least indirect responsibility for the regime's nationality policy, Kapto's appointment and track record raise the possibility that he was selected to help formulate a tougher line on nationalism.

Kapto's first deputy chief, Aleksandr Degtyarev, was identified in late November. Degtyarev, who was a rising star in the Leningrad ideological firmament, may owe his appointment to Medvedev, who is originally from that region. Among the department's deputy chiefs, allegiances are less clear, but several have worked previously under Yakovlev, Medvedev, or both.

Of the nine branch economic departments¹¹ that existed before the reorganization, only two—the

Agrarian Department (formerly Agriculture and Food Industry) and the Defense Department (formerly Defense Industry)—remain more or less intact. The other seven have been abolished, and possibly incorporated as sectors of the new *Socioeconomic Department* (previously the Economic Department, headed by Slyun'kov). Socioeconomic Department Chief Vladimir Shimko, a specialist in the defense industrial sector, worked previously in the Soviet Union's radio industry, in the party's Defense Industry Department, and as Minister of the Radio Industry. In being named head of the Socioeconomic Department, Shimko passed over Vladimir Mozhin, the longtime first deputy chief of the Economic Department. Mozhin remains as a first deputy. Nikolay Stashenkov, who headed the defunct Trade and Domestic Services Department, was also identified as a first deputy chief of the department in December.

The systematic elimination of the branch economic departments became apparent early last summer, as senior officials were reassigned to jobs outside Moscow and not replaced in the Moscow posts (see table 3). This exodus from the highest levels of the party's economic apparatus is the clearest indication that Gorbachev's efforts to take the party out of the day-to-day management of the economy are sincere. Even if the new Socioeconomic Department increases its size, it cannot possibly hope to follow the many sectors of the economy in the depth that the old branch departments did.

Few details of the *Agrarian Department* were publicized immediately after the reorganization, but, since the first of the year, it has become increasingly clear that the department is almost the same as its prereorganization predecessor. Documents of the 28 November Central Committee plenum identified Ivan Skiba, the incumbent, as department head. Yu. I. Mordvintsev, who had served under Skiba in the old Agriculture and Food Industry Department, remains as first deputy chief, and three holdovers remain as deputy chiefs as well.

¹¹ The term "branch economic departments" refers to those departments that dealt with specific areas of the economy. Branch economic departments that were abolished in the reorganization are: Heavy Industry, Machine-Building and Power Engineering, Light Industry and Consumer Goods, Construction, Chemical Industry, Trade and Domestic Services, and Transportation and Communications.

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Table 3
Economic Party Officials Head for the Hinterlands

	Former Post	Current Post	Appointed
Leonid Bobykin ^a	Chief, Light Industry Department	Sverdlovsk Obkom first secretary	June 1988
Arkadiy Vol'skiy ^c	Chief, Machine-Building Department	Central Committee/Supreme Soviet representative in the Caucasus	July
Veniamin Afonin	Chief, Chemical Industry Department	Kuybyshev Obkom first secretary	July
Yevgeniy Chernyshev ^b	Deputy Chief, Machine-Building Department	Perm Obkom first secretary	August
Viktor Pasternak ^b	Chief, Transportation and Communications Department	Khabarovsk Kraykom first secretary	September
Aleksandr Mel'nikov	Chief, Construction Department	Kemerovo Obkom first secretary	November
Sabit Bayzhanov	Probably inspector, Transportation and Communications Department	Dzhambul Obkom (Kazakhstan) first secretary	December

^a Many leading workers in the Central Committee's economic apparatus have been appointed to regional posts since last summer, offering proof that the party's branch economic departments have been abolished.

^b Bobykin, Chernyshev, and Pasternak all returned to their home regions, as have several other recent appointees who were not in the Central Committee apparatus. This new trend in appointments suggests that Moscow will retain a strong hand in naming regional leaders, but it also suggests that in doing so, Gorbachev and cadres secretary Razumovskiy will take care to maintain a semblance of democracy by appointing native sons when possible rather than sending in total strangers from Moscow to fill regional vacancies.

^c In January, the Soviet media began referring to Vol'skiy as "chairman of a special administrative committee" in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and, after a five-month lapse, as "chief of a CPSU Central Committee department." Vol'skiy may have been identified as a department chief for reasons of rank or by mistake, but there can be no doubt that he is no longer chief of the Machine-Building Department, which was eliminated in the reorganization.

Oleg Bel'yakov, chief of the *Defense Department*, is the only official of that department to be identified publicly since the reorganization. Bel'yakov was trained as an engineer and probably spent his early career working in the Leningrad military-industrial complex. He has spent most of his 25-year party career in the Defense Industry Department or its derivative, and, in the early 1980s, he served as an aide to then party Secretary for Defense Industry Grigoriy Romanov. Although it rarely receives attention in the media, Bel'yakov's department will be in a particularly sensitive position, because it will presumably play a major role in overseeing the changeover of some defense enterprises to civilian consumer production. The shortening of the department's name may reflect a desire to deemphasize the department's management of a sector of the Soviet economy. It does not indicate that the department will assume any direct supervision of the military. (C NF) ^b

The chief difference in the *International Department* is that it has subsumed the former Bloc Liaison Department—previously headed by Medvedev—and Cadres Abroad Department—whose aging chief, Stepan Chervonenko, has retired. Newly appointed department chief Falin has been involved for most of his career in European affairs, indicating a possible shift from the emphasis on US-Soviet relations that developed under Falin's predecessor, Dobrynin. [] told [] that, although his department would no longer deal with "operative" questions, it would now work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when drafting regime policy statements on international affairs

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An apparent supporter of Gorbachev's domestic policies, Falin has been more conservative on international issues; he has publicly defended the Stalin-Hitler nonaggression pact and blamed the West for originating the Cold War—positions that deviate from those in the forefront of "new thinking." His first deputy chiefs, Karen Brutents (a former deputy chief in the "old" International Department) and Rafail Fedorov (a former deputy chief in the Bloc Liaison Department), bring new regional expertise to the department's leadership. Former first deputies Georgiy Korniyenko and Vadim Zagladin both focused on East-West relations through much of their careers, while Brutents is a prominent Third World specialist and Fedorov an East European expert. At least six deputy department chiefs—including several holdovers—with a variety of backgrounds have been identified, indicating that the International Department will continue to be broken into regional and functional sectors.

Little about the *State and Legal Department* has been publicized, suggesting either a continuation of traditional reluctance to identify some of its personnel or that the final structure and staff of the department may still be unsettled. The department is responsible for many of the same functions as its predecessor, the Administrative Organs Department, which monitored the military, security apparatus, judicial system, and the police. The State and Legal Department has apparently added a sector, which previously existed in the Cadre Department, for oversight of nationalities issues. The sector's head, Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, was identified in the press as a deputy chief of the State and Legal Department.

Aleksandr Pavlov, who had previously served as a deputy chief of the Administrative Organs Department, was identified as chief of the new department in early November. Pavlov has worked for over 20 years in the party apparatus, overseeing the national and republic procuracies. In a speech to Tashkent voters in March, Pavlov said little to distinguish himself as either a reformer or a traditionalist, but emphasized the themes of law and order and updating the Soviet legal code. That Pavlov is a legal expert, rather than a

military or security specialist, is probably indicative of the importance of the forthcoming legal reforms. A new first deputy, V. Ye. Sidorov, also appears to be a legal expert. Pavlov leapfrogged over I. A. Larin, a military officer who remains as the department's other first deputy.

What Will Change?

Although the apparatus as a whole has sustained major cuts in its overall size, the remaining departments actually appear to have been strengthened by an influx of personnel from the disbanded departments. Unless power can be successfully shifted from the party apparatus to the corresponding state bodies, there may be little real change in a system in which the party apparatus has been responsible only to itself. Reformist party worker Leon Onikov, in a *Pravda* interview, illustrated the absurdity of the "old" system:

In effect, most draft resolutions were prepared in secret by the party committee apparatus. After adopting the resolutions the same apparatus carried them out, then it verified how the resolutions it was executing were being executed, and finally that same apparatus reported back on how it had executed them. This undemocratic practice is clearly contrary to the requirements of restructuring and means that many of the CPSU Central Committee's general party resolutions are destined to have little effect.

It is difficult to gauge the level of support for the old way of doing things described by Onikov, but there undoubtedly remain *apparatchiki* who are jealously defending their authority. Although the technical subordination of the apparatus to the commissions severs the apparatus's direct link to the Politburo, it remains unclear whether the separation can be maintained in practice. The Soviets appear uncertain and even confused over how the restructured apparatus will function when the reforms are implemented.

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Implications for Political Reform

Gorbachev's reorganization of the party apparatus has the potential to change the way Soviet politics is practiced. It represents the most comprehensive transformation of the party's structure since Khrushchev's bifurcation of the apparatus in 1962. Although it is clear the reorganization was hastily contrived and motivated in part by Gorbachev's desire to enhance his power and circumvent Ligachev's control of the Secretariat, it also fits within Gorbachev's overall political reform scheme. Its impact on the distribution of powers in the Soviet political system remains to be seen, but Gorbachev apparently hopes it will help his long-term effort to reduce party involvement in day-to-day decisionmaking and management and enhance the ability of state institutions and economic organizations to assume those functions. It remains unclear, however, how the newly created Supreme Soviet committees and standing commissions will interact with the party's executive bodies, in particular, the Politburo and the Central Committee commissions.

Gorbachev appears determined to curtail some party functions and eliminate others altogether. He seems to have concluded that the party's supervision of so many areas of daily Soviet life has been a key source of stagnation and that party control must be relaxed, if not across the board, at least in certain important areas, including:

- *The economy.* Eliminating the party's day-to-day supervision of the economy and simultaneously reducing the government bureaucracy's role underscores the greater play being given to market forces in the Soviet economy. The party has eliminated all but two of its departments that corresponded to sectors of the economy.
- *The media.* The party is withdrawing from its directive role. As *glasnost* has expanded, the party's ideological departments have shifted to providing, at most, general guidance rather than specific instructions. The party has consolidated three ideological departments into one.

- *Personnel selection.* To the extent that reforms of the electoral process succeed and expand, the role of the party apparatus in personnel selection will presumably decline, leaving cadre departments with less to do and less in need of large staffs. The national election for the Congress of People's Deputies in March was the most dramatic example to date of the party's shrinking ability to dictate appointments to official posts.

Redistributing Power

The reorganization of the party apparatus has had a profound impact on the party's highest executive organs—the Politburo, Secretariat, and Central Committee—and on Gorbachev's ability to dominate them. It appears that the commissions will perform much the same policymaking role as the Secretariat did, but they will probably formalize the lines of authority within the leadership, making the Politburo the uncontested decisionmaking body. The realignment makes the party secretaries—with the exception of Gorbachev, who stands clearly above the rest—formal equals and will make it difficult for individual secretaries other than Gorbachev to dabble in fields other than their own.

Gorbachev would almost certainly take advantage of his position as chairman of a stronger Politburo to build support for reform. A potential problem that Gorbachev faces in strengthening the Politburo, however, is that it could become even more bogged down in administrative minutiae than it already is [] [] party secretary Yakovlev expressed annoyance that the Politburo was "overloaded with the management of details inappropriate to its function, which is to focus on larger issues." The commissions' infrequent meeting schedules probably will not lessen the Politburo's heavy administrative load, and, without the Secretariat to filter out the less important issues, the Politburo could find itself overwhelmed in detail.

Gorbachev hopes to prevent overloading the Politburo by leaving administrative details to the Central Committee departments, the government structure, and

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the new state institutions. In theory, both the Politburo and Secretariat are being stripped of some of their former responsibilities. But, as []

[] the Politburo "will remain the supreme decisionmaking body." Although both the Politburo and Secretariat will retreat to a "strategic role," the Secretariat's role is supposed to be clearly subordinate to that of the Politburo.

Gorbachev may hope to use the commissions to "divide and conquer" what is left of the Central Committee, assuming that several small commissions—some with an apparently high concentration of reformers—will be more compliant and supportive of reform than one larger, more orthodox body. Clear opponents of economic reforms on the Central Committee—particularly the heads of industrial ministries and state committees who would be most threatened by their implementation—are almost completely excluded from commission membership. Gorbachev's purge of the Central Committee at the April 1989 plenum dispatched a large bloc of Brezhnev-era holdovers who presumably were not enthusiastic about reform.

Implications for Gorbachev

In the process of shifting power from the party to the state, Gorbachev has laid the groundwork for changes that will bolster his own position. The reorganization has handicapped potential rivals by shifting, in theory, a great deal of power not only to the state apparatus and individual enterprises, but also to a strengthened presidency—a post that Gorbachev conveniently fills. It is likely that, with the party's continued dominance of the policymaking process, the state presidency will only be as powerful as the party's General Secretary can make it

[] indicates that Gorbachev intends to go beyond undermining the Secretariat to "eventually weaken the role of the General Secretary" vis-a-vis the presidency. It is conceivable that Gorbachev would eventually trade the enormous institutional power of party leader for the constitutional power of a strengthened state presidency. The time when such a trade-off will be politically tenable, however, appears to be substantially down the road. It is more likely

that Gorbachev will wait until he is sufficiently confident of the powers of the presidency and equally sure of his Politburo colleagues' respect of those powers before he acts to undermine the authority of the party to such an extreme

An Uncertain Outlook

Like many of his reforms, Gorbachev's reorganization of the party apparatus bears telltale signs of decision-making on the march. Although Gorbachev has tried to project a cohesive vision of how power should be distributed between the Communist Party, Supreme Soviet, and Council of Ministers, in reality it is doubtful that even he knows how it will work in practice. There is considerable confusion—even among senior officials close to Gorbachev—over the functions of the restructured party apparatus. In fact, several noted reformers have expressed confusion over how the new party and state structures will interact:

[] told [] that it was not yet clear to him how the new party structure would work, particularly vis-a-vis the reformed Supreme Soviet. A month later, [], apparently unsure of how the commissions and departments would interact, offered [] contradictory opinions in almost the same sentence. []

[] told [] that the leadership had not provided any clear guidelines on how the commissions were to function. Moreover, all the commissions had not met for the first time until nearly four months after their memberships were confirmed at the 28 November plenum

The failure of the Soviets to work out some of the fine points of the reorganization may reflect a degree of controversy and resistance within the party ranks.

[] shortly after the September 1988 plenum mentioned a letter from Gorbachev—presumably the 24 August letter—which elicited "a storm" of opposition within the Politburo and Central Committee over the proposed emasculation of the Secretariat. Moreover, [] indicated that, although there was "a broad circle" of dissatisfied party

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members opposed to the proposals contained in the letter, they were not organized and did not dare openly state their opposition.

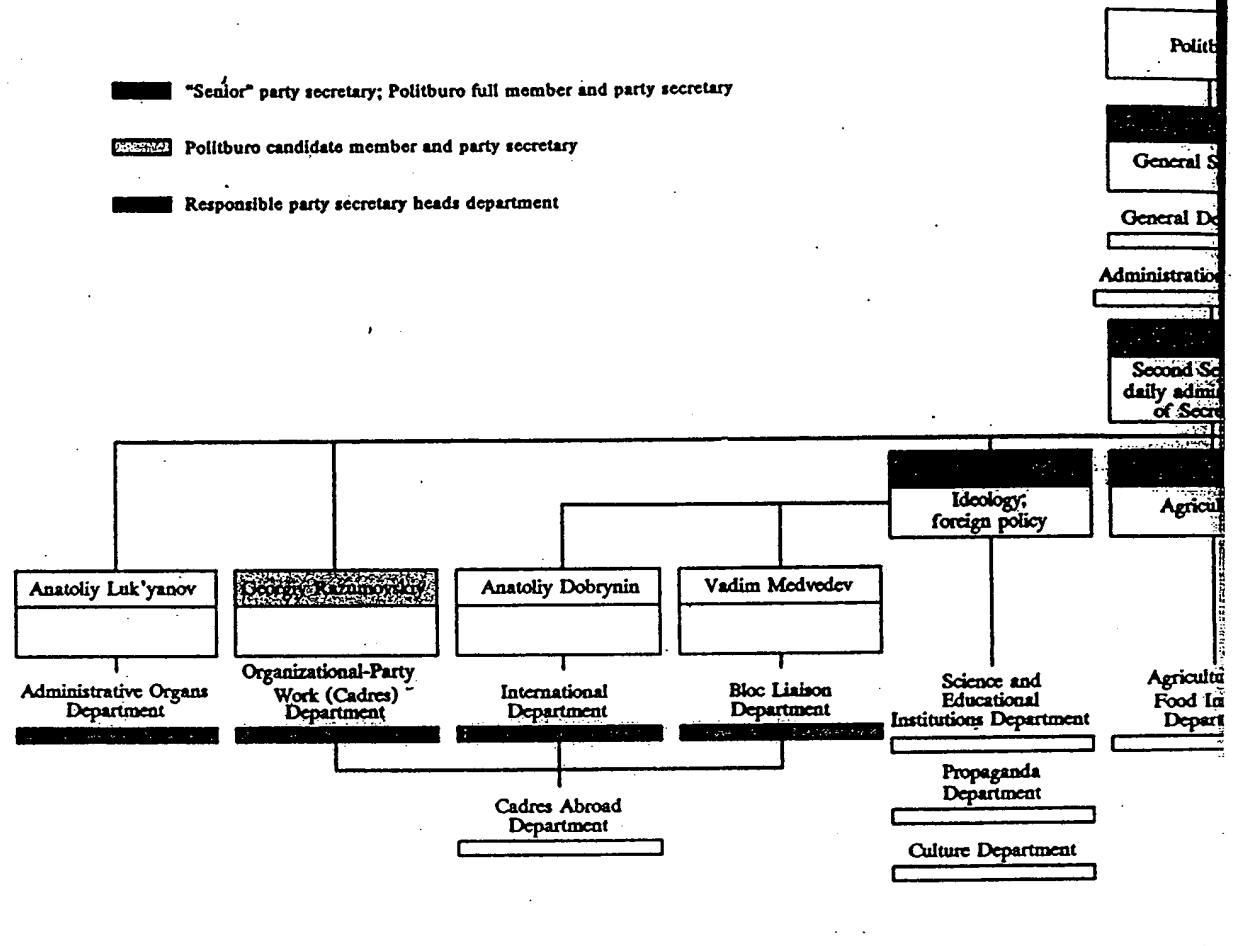
Although their concerns undoubtedly find expression through the more orthodox members of the leadership, the party apparatus suffered a major blow when its "protector," Ligachev, was removed as second secretary. Ligachev's removal and the overall decline in prestige associated with party work have contributed to a burgeoning morale problem in the apparatus. Threats of further cuts, whether genuine or not, have probably galvanized the apparatus in its determination to cling to its few remaining prerogatives.

Now that the Secretariat and the bulk of the Central Committee are cut out of the policymaking picture, Gorbachev will have to ensure that they stay out. If the commissions falter as policymaking bodies, a resurgent Secretariat could reestablish itself at the center of the policy process. For reform to succeed, Gorbachev will need commissions and a party apparatus that are committed to carrying out not only the letter of his policies, but also the spirit as well.

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Figure 1
Reorganization of the Soviet Party Apparatus

Structure Before 30 September 1988



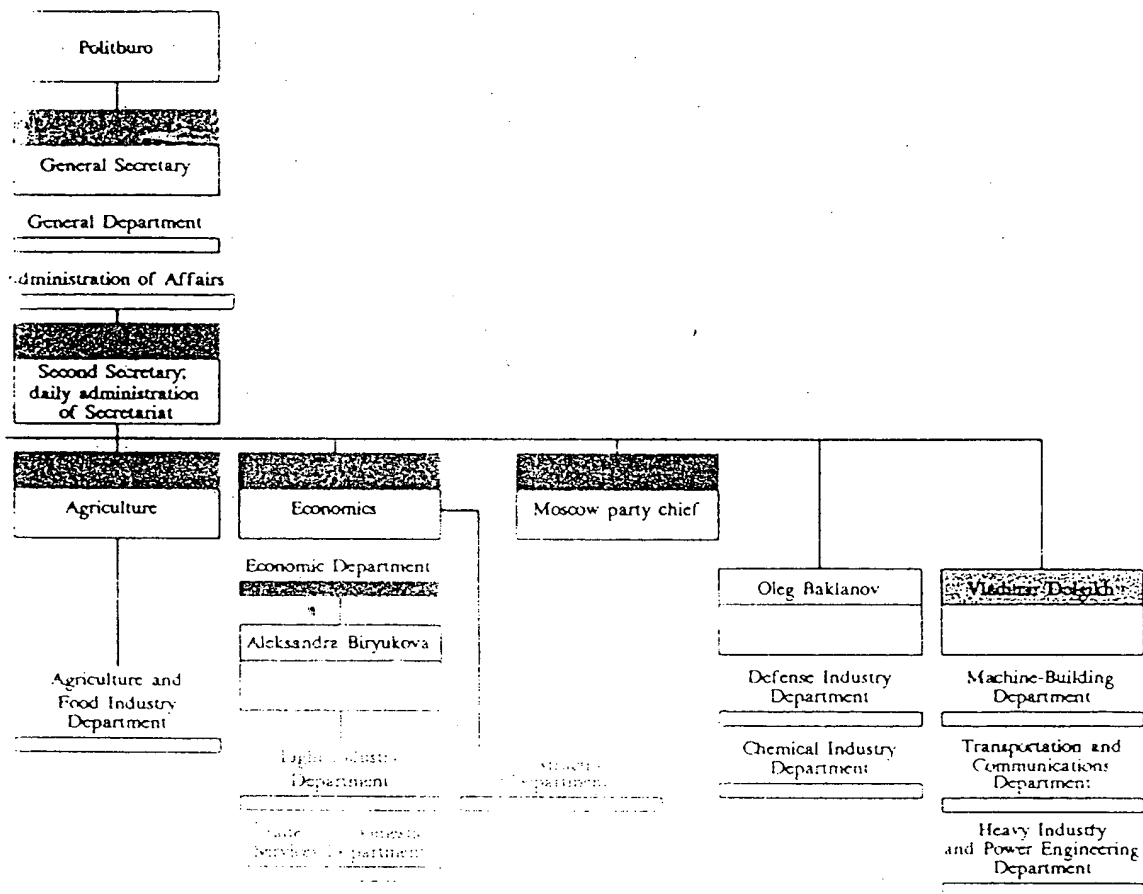


Figure 2
Reorganization of the Soviet Party Apparatus

Probable Structure

